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Testimony by Nick J. Morrione to the Public Safety and Security Committee regarding raised bill 825.
An act concerning paintball safety.

Hogan's Alley Paintball is a commercial paintball field located in Meriden Connecticut. We employ over 25 people, and service thousands of paintball players each year. We have been operating for over 10 years and have not had any serious injuries during that time. I appreciate the opportunity to represent my organization on the matter of bill 825 regarding paintball safety.

I am against this bill. About 70% of our players are under 18. Section 1 requires that participants under 18 years of age have safety instruction that may include a video presentation, verbal instruction, and an examination. This section is redundant to the ASTM F1777-02 standard practice for Paintball Field Operation that paintball fields follow. Section 4.2 of those standards read "Prior to their first game of the day **every** player shall be given a formal briefing on safety rules, risk of injury, game rules, field orientation, and equipment operation." Our safety briefings are tailored to the needs of the group we are speaking to at the time. Because paintball players come in at any time all throughout the day, having a lengthy briefing with a certificate issued after will greatly complicate the check in procedure and reduce attendance. The safety briefing we already do is backed up by supervision of the players on and off the field to enforce our strict safety regulations.

In tough economic times attendance suffers simply because people don't want to pay to play at a commercial field. If you start to add unnecessary regulations that effect play only on commercial fields, more people will play on private property and the community will suffer because of it. Games played outside of commercial paintball fields almost never conform to the safety standards that we enforce. If this bill were to pass, it is my opinion that it would become burdensome for young players to play at commercial fields and would seek unsupervised play on private property where their risk of injury will be substantially higher.

In section 2 part a, it requires that all players provide proof of purchase of a helmet. A helmet is unnecessary. The ASTM has set the standards for safe paintball play headwear. This headwear is a full face and ear coverage mask, but doesn't provide the coverage of a helmet. The ASTM also mandates that all paintball markers and boxes of paintballs have clear warnings printed on them to stress the need of the proper headwear. When dealing with an ever increasing amount of internet shopping, adding restrictions to local sales of paintball markers will hurt our economy.

Section 2 part b will cost the taxpayers more by having the state enforce this unneeded act and opens the door for additional regulations that will hurt the only safe places for people to play.

In closing I feel that this bill should not be passed due to the high standards we already employ that provided 25 years of safe recreation for Connecticut.